

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 51/040/2007

8 March 2007

Further information on UA 45/07 (AMR 51/033/2007, 26 February 2007) – Death penalty / Legal concern

USA (Texas) Joseph Bennard Nichols (m), black, aged 45

Joseph Nichols was executed in Texas on 7 March 2007. He was sentenced to death in 1982 for the murder of 70-year-old grocery store employee Claude Shaffer in 1980. Joseph Nichols was 19 years and one month old at the time of the crime. He had been on death row for 25 years.

About 90 minutes before the execution, the US Supreme Court refused to issue a stay. Earlier in the week, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles had denied clemency. Governor Rick Perry failed to intervene in the case.

Joseph Nichols becomes the ninth person to be put to death in the USA this year, and the eighth to be executed in Texas. His was the 1,066th execution in the USA since judicial killing resumed in 1977. Texas accounts for 387 of these executions. Joseph Nichols was the 148th person to be put to death in Texas since Governor Perry took office in 2001.

No further action by the UA Network is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.